

THE PORCELAIN CABINET

IN THE TOWER ROOM OF DRESDEN'S

ROYAL PALACE



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ROYAL PALACE**

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THE PORCELAIN CABINET IN THE TOWER ROOM OF THE DRESDEN RESIDENCE

The creation of the Dresden porcelain cabinet stemmed from a decision made by the Elector of Saxony and King in Poland Augustus the Strong (1670/1694–1733). However, no archival documentation for this decision has hitherto been found. Similarly, we still do not know whether the decision was accompanied by a specific and concrete concept. What we do know, however, is that there was porcelain in the Tower Room from the mid-1730s and that from then onwards the quantity on display increased constantly, indicating that here August III realized his father's intention. A first high point in this development was reached when the stock of porcelain was recorded in the Residence inventory of 1769. By that time, porcelain had taken up position in arrangements on the walls – on consoles and on shelves.

The inventories also refer to the cabinet with the term *Buffet* (side-board), a functional designation deriving from the room's previous purpose as the *Silberbuffet*. When the cabinet came to house porcelain, the name stuck.

A buffet was usually a permanent fitting mounted at one end of a rectangular room and furnished with numerous finely crafted utensils for the festive board such as coolers and other vessels. However, the goal of the buffet was purely representative and the individual items were not intended for use. On the contrary, the buffet was part of the costly wall decoration customary in palaces and in Dresden remained a fixed element in court ceremonial from the end of the 16th century until the demise of the monarchy in 1918. What was unusual about the

silver buffet in the Tower Room (and its successor the porcelain buffet) was that it had a whole room to itself and was not directly linked to a dining table.

The aim of the present chapter is to give an account of the genesis of the Dresden porcelain cabinet and to trace its development from the mid-18th century through to 1945. It will also extend to cover the events after 1945 and the subsequent attempts to recover the Tower Room porcelain that disappeared from the storage depots and to return it to the care of the Porzellansammlung, subjects also dealt with in valuable essays by co-authors of the present volume. The first scholars to devote essays to the Tower Room and its porcelain were in fact Ernst Zimmermann, Fritz Fichtner and Friedrich Reichel,¹ before whose publications there had been no serious studies. Previously, the 19th- and early 20th-century specialist literature on porcelain had usually dismissed the Dresden porcelain cabinet with only a few sentences.

The extensive building projects aimed at the completion of the Japanese Palace, which Augustus the Strong had envisaged as ending up as a fully fledged porcelain palace, were for various reasons not finally crowned with success, and in the years from around 1759 until 1886 the Chinese, Japanese and Meissen porcelain was housed in the palace's basement storey. Nevertheless, the Japanese Palace had a more prominent place in the contemporary consciousness than the Tower Room and was accorded several pages of detailed description in many travel reports of the period.



Fig. 1

Underside of a celadon-coloured bottle vase
with the Japanese Palace inventory number N 357 W
Meissen, ca. 1735, Ø 10 cm
Dresden, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 5242

Fig. 2
The Tower Room in the Dresden Residence
 Reproduced from Römmler & Jonas,
Das Königliche Residenz-Schloß zu Dresden, 1896
 Dresden, Kunstbibliothek, inv. no. T 215, plate 20

THE PORCELAIN CABINET IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Contemporary reports

Given the fact that the Japanese Palace was accorded so much attention in historical travel reports and descriptions of the sights of Dresden, it seemed a promising idea to examine these sources more closely for references to the Tower Room, in order to establish a more precise time frame for the installation of the porcelain cabinet and gain an idea of the room's image in the contemporary mind. First, however, these sources had to be subjected to critical analysis, as even at his death in 1733 Augustus the Strong was still struggling with the new ordering of his collections, and the art treasures he had amassed did not reach their permanent locations in the Residence, the Zwinger, the later Johanneum and the country seats outside Dresden until the middle of the 18th century. His spontaneity and creativity had always tended to lead to sudden changes of plan and provisional arrangements. Consequently, when special treasures had changed their location, travel-writers sometimes had difficulty giving satisfactory descriptions and penned summary accounts that are partly not entirely comprehensible to us today.² One author, for example, without having actually inspected certain premises – or, rather, without having been able to – simply lifted passages from a previous writer and consequently provided no authentic information on the situation at the time of his visit.

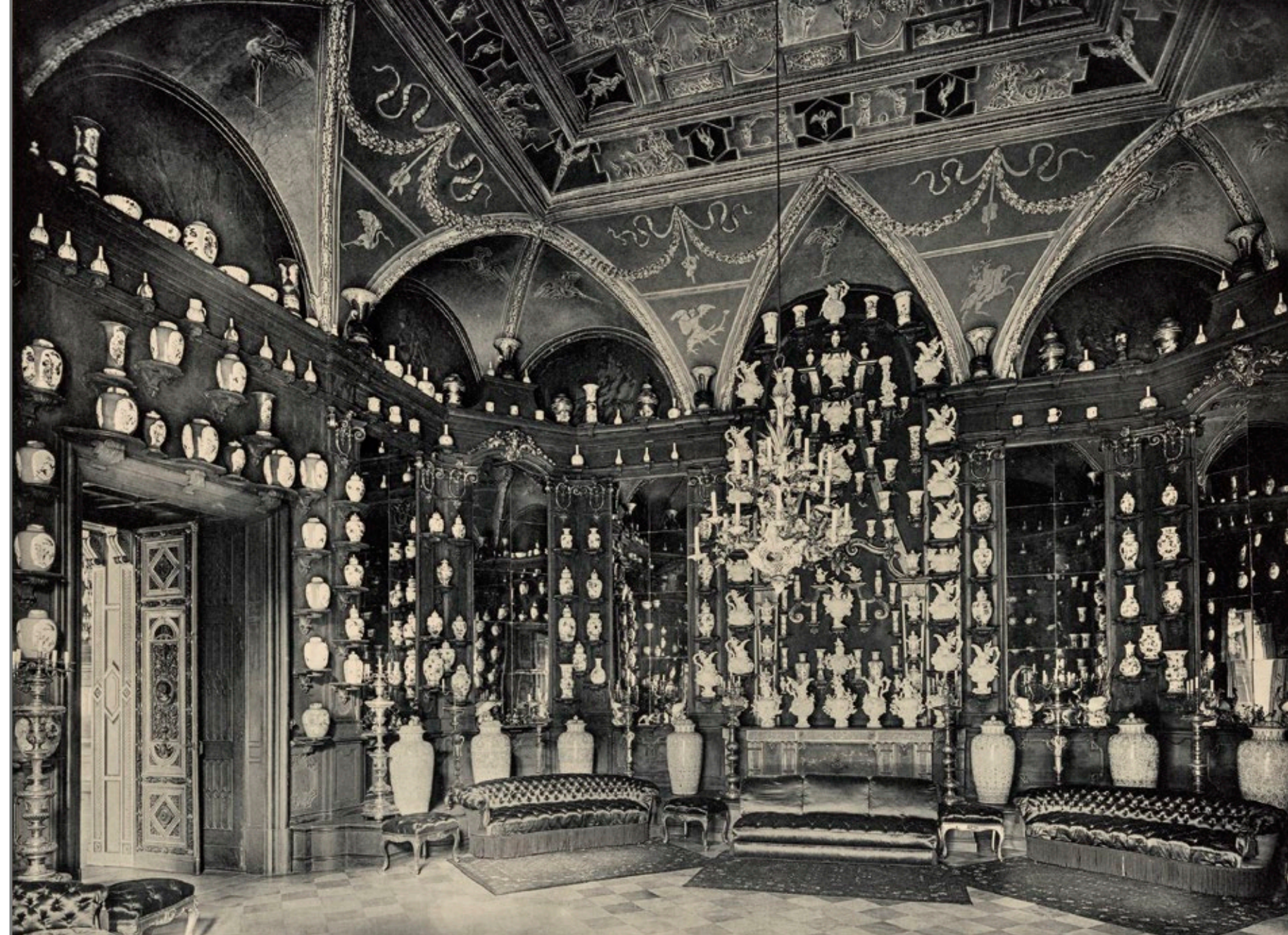
In 1723 the chronicler of the Dresden court Johann Christian Crell (1690–1762), writing under the pseudonym 'Iccander', stated of the Silver Buffet that it was located 'directly under the palace tower' and that 'in it, everyone is transported outside themselves when they behold its precious objects in gold and silver, bowls, goblets, guéridons and so forth.'³

One reliable source is the travel report written by Johann Georg Keyssler (1696–1743),⁴ who in the years 1728–1730 accompanied two young noblemen from Hanover on their grand tour of Europe, visiting the Dresden collections with them in October 1730.⁵ When being taken around the palace, coming from the Audience Chamber he also visited

the Tower Room, which he referred to as the 'Silber-Cammer'. In his report on the silver items Keyssler took particular note of the large guéridons, certain vessels as tall as a man, and huge rinsing bowls, also recording that all the silver objects had been manufactured between 1717 and 1719.⁶ In addition, information on the Tower Room being decorated with silver is provided in the report on the masked ball held in the carnival season of 1732 entitled 'Kurtze Nachricht von der im Jahre 1732 bey dem Carneval zu Dresden gehaltenen Redoute' that appeared in the journal *Curiosa Saxonica* published by Crell. When coming out of the *Riesengemach*, which was the ballroom, he wrote, 'the dominos and masked members of the nobility can promenade through the so-called Buffet under the palace tower, where the large silver services stand on either side, into the famous Propositions-Saal.'⁷

In the 'Sächsisches Curiositäten-Cabinett auf das Jahr 1733' is an article dated 12 November of that year on the Dutch – or Japanese – Palace, which refers to the royal command of 1730 concerning the palace's rebuilding and extension. Given that the building work had begun around 1727, it follows that by 1733 it must have been at an advanced stage. As the article reports: 'In this year [1733?] the Royal Chamber of Art and Wonders was for the interim period once again brought to safety to Dresden, and also the other precious items and the incomparable porcelain, until such time as it [the building work] is completed, so that it may come to no harm.'⁸ This formulation strongly suggests that in 1733 the Japanese Palace porcelain was about to find a more secure home elsewhere, or indeed had already done so. However, in the course of the rebuilding of the Dutch Palace begun in 1727, which transformed it into the Japanese Palace, the existing stable foundation walls were not dispensed with but simply given a new cladding. Consequently, a secure environment was still provided by the basement storey, to which the porcelain had been transferred as early as the spring of 1730.⁹ From this point there was thus an opportunity for pieces to be selected for the Tower Room from the porcelain no longer on display.

Between 1736 and 1737, two gentlemen from south-west England, Richard Pococke (1704–1765) and his cousin Jeremiah Milles (1714–1784), undertook a journey around Europe. During this time they wrote diaries and letters that have been preserved at the British Library. In



December 1736 they visited the Dresden Residence. Pococke's diary gives a somewhat lapidary account of the Tower Room's furnishings: 'The middle room in the tower is adorned with china on each side.'¹⁰ Its brevity notwithstanding, this source gives certain confirmation that in 1736 there was porcelain standing on the consoles and pedestals of the Tower Room, perhaps on all its sides. Thanks to the article in the *Curiosa Saxonica* and this statement by Pococke, we may assume the first installation of the porcelain cabinet to have taken place between 1733 and 1736.

In 1741, the young organ-builder Johann Andreas Silbermann (1712–1783), nephew of the famous organ-builder Gottfried Silbermann (1683–1753), wrote a diary describing his experiences and impressions on a journey from Strasbourg to such places as Gotha, Leipzig, Dresden, Freiberg, Zittau and Berlin.¹¹ In his entries for his stay in Dresden he

gives a detailed account of the porcelain in the Japanese Palace. Given that on 15 May 1741 he visited the Residence, one might expect an equally interesting description of what he saw there. Sadly he disappoints us: obviously the vast array of porcelain in the Tower Room made no impression upon him, as he leaves it unmentioned, soberingly reporting on the Residence that 'for the rest, there was nothing special to be seen either in the way of furniture or of precious objects.'¹²

Three years later, in 1744, appeared the *Neues europäisches historisches Reise-Lexicon* by Carl Christian Schramm (1703–before 1760),¹³ whom we know to have been active as an advocate in Dresden in 1724. From 1728 to 1751 he is named in the 'Dresdner Hof- und Staatskalender' as one of the 'Revisores' in the 'Cammer-Collegium',¹⁴ and it was very likely during this period that he gathered his facts about the city's most notable features. He urged visitors to the Residence not to miss 'the



Fig. 28
Packing of the 'Ming section' into crates,
September 1939
Dresden, Porzellansammlung, Fotoarchiv,
archive no. FN_A_69

Safeguarding and evacuation of the porcelain from the Tower Room between 1939 and 1945

Already on 27 August 1939, before the outbreak of the Second World War, preparations were initiated for the protection of cultural objects and works of art housed in museums, collections and castles.¹¹¹ As the department head within the Ministerium für Volksbildung (Ministry of Education) who was responsible for the 'Staatliche Sammlungen für Kunst und Wissenschaft', Fritz Fichtner had since 1936 been in charge of protective measures for the Porzellansammlung.¹¹²

The first air-raid precautions were taken shortly afterwards. Wooden crates and packaging material were ordered for the evacuation of cultural property from the buildings of the Dresden art collections (fig. 27).¹¹³ It defies belief that, at a time when there was a shortage of wood, fuel and transport vehicles, it proved possible to pack the numerous collection objects, after recording them appropriately, and to transport them to storage shelters outside Dresden. An additional complicating factor was that many of the male museum staff had been called up for military service.

The Porzellansammlung was particularly severely affected. Since 1876 it had been housed in cramped conditions in the Johanneum, where it operated as a kind of study collection. Already in 1910, Ernst Zimmermann had suggested that the collection be moved to the Zwinger,¹¹⁴ and it was eventually under Fritz Fichtner that the collection came to be housed in that emblematic venue. In 1938, after a lengthy refurbishment and the installation of display fittings in the arched galleries and the Long Gallery in the direction of the Kronentor, the East Asian porcelain began gradually to be moved to the Zwinger (fig. 26). By July 1939 the Chinese Section had been set up, and it was scheduled to be opened to the public on 21 September 1939, with an inauguration ceremony and a supporting programme of events. Nothing came of that, however, because of the start of the Second World War on 1 September 1939. Shortly afterwards, the collection items began to be packed into crates again and made ready for evacuation to storage sites (fig. 28). The idea behind the operation was to disperse the art treasures to a number of locations so as to forestall the destruction of the entire collection. Thus, the porcelain was evacuated to various places in Saxony, including Königstein, Pulsnitz, Rammenau, Reichstädt, Seifersdorf, Schieritz, Weesenstein and Meissen (fig. 29).¹¹⁵



Fig. 26
Japanese porcelain being transferred to the Zwinger, 1938
Dresden, Porzellansammlung, Fotoarchiv, archive no. FN_A_6929

Fig. 27
Packaging material being unloaded in front of the Zwinger, where
the Porzellansammlung was housed, probably in 1941
Dresden, Porzellansammlung, Fotoarchiv, archive no. FN_D_KK_8



Fig. 33
**Schloss Schleinitz near Leuben
in the Meissen district, ca. 1930**
Dresden, SLUB, Deutsche Fotothek,
photo no. df_hauptkatalog_0012851



**Evacuation and repatriation of the works of art from
the storage site at Schleinitz**

In the annual report of the Porzellansammlung for 1943/44 it says: ‘As at 31 March 1944, the Porcelain Gallery was occupying the following depots: ... No. 6. Schl. Part of the Meissen section, Dragoons vases.’ That ‘part of the Meissen section’ referred to the holdings of the Tower Room and that ‘Schl.’ stood for Schleinitz (fig. 33) can be inferred from the official records dealing with the repatriation of cultural property after 1945. According to a ‘list of the places in which objects from the collections of the State Museums in Dresden are currently (as at 20 March 1946) still stored’, at Schleinitz there were ‘ca. 80 crates of porcelain from the Porcelain Gallery, 17 Dragoons vases and all of the porcelain from the Tower Room of the Dresden Residence’.¹³⁰

Fig. 34
Covered vase
Meissen, ca. 1735, H. 31.1 cm
Dresden, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 8252 a, b
The body of the vase was restituted to the Porzellansammlung
from private ownership in Altenburg; the cover was restituted
in 2018 from a Canadian private collection.



In various storage depots, however, there occurred instances of plundering by individual Soviet soldiers, local inhabitants, prisoners of war, forced labourers and refugees. In many cases, such acts may have been prompted by personal necessity: unaware of its real value, people put the precious porcelain to everyday use or bartered it for food. As a result, the porcelain forfeited its original function as a museum object. Thus, Lotte Döhring (1914–2002), who as a refugee from Silesia was billeted at Schleinitz together with her family in April 1945, recorded in her diary and memoirs how Russian soldiers looted the castle, where priceless Meissen porcelain was stored in the chapel: ‘On both sides of the nave, from the entrance to the altar, stood the narrow crates, each roughly one metre high.’ She vividly recalled how the refugee women had to make jam for the soldiers and what happened once all the available pots in the castle had been filled: ‘One morning we saw 15 splendid large vases standing on the floor in a corner of the kitchen. The jam was to be poured into them. ... More vases were brought, each more beautiful than the other – there were also some Chinese vases among them, certainly very ancient ones, too. This went on week after week throughout the summer. We asked the Russians to bring the empty vases back from Altenburg [see fig. 34]. They merely shrugged their shoulders and shook their heads.’¹³¹

On 8 May 1945, Germany capitulated unconditionally and, in accordance with the Berlin Declaration of 5 June 1945, supreme governmental authority was assumed by the four Allied powers. Saxony was located in the Soviet zone of occupation (fig. 35).

Consequently, the storage depots of the Dresden collections were commandeered by the Soviet occupying power. A large part of the collections was carried off to the USSR. It was only gradually that the depots were made accessible and the objets d’art that were left could be removed by authorized representatives of the Dresden museums.

The depot at Schloss Schleinitz was to have been inspected in July 1946 by Gruve and the Landrat of Meissen district, Petersen, in the presence of the local Soviet commander, ‘Yurechkov’, but the visit had to be called off when no lorry was found to be available. It was not until the start of 1947 that ‘the management of the State museums was given permission by the Russian district commander’ to collect ‘part of the

Fig. 35
**Soviet soldiers in front of the
Dresden Residence, 1945**
Dresden, SLUB, Deutsche Fotothek,
photo no. df_hauptkatalog_0272042



material stored for safe keeping at the castle’.¹³² In February 1947, the Russians vacated Schleinitz, though the Staatliche Museen Dresden were not informed of this immediately. However, in April 1947 Gruve was able to report that the depot had been cleared, except for a few pieces of furniture.¹³³ It was probably in the period from May 1945 to February 1947 that the cultural property stored there suffered the greatest losses as a result of unauthorized removals and looting. What became of the objects can be established only to a limited extent. Some of them, as we know today, ended up illegally in private hands in the local area.¹³⁴ Thus, in September 1947, during searches of households in Schleinitz, Praterschütz and Leuben, numerous objets d’art, including paintings and porcelain, were seized by the Meissen district police.¹³⁵ According to the archival records, 70 porcelain items were duly delivered at the Albertinum in Dresden on 13 November 1947.¹³⁶ They included



JULIA WEBER

A TOUR DE FORCE OF PORCELAIN MODELLING

JOHANN JOACHIM KAENDLER'S 'ELEMENTS' VASES FOR LOUIS XV OF FRANCE

The reconstruction of the Tower Room in the Dresden Residence has enabled outstanding major works of Meissen porcelain to be returned to the place where they were on display for around two centuries, testifying throughout to the pioneering artistic and technical achievements of Europe's first porcelain manufactory. Merely on account of their size and the shining white of their undecorated surfaces, which contrasted so effectively with the red lacquer panelling and gilded consoles, the 'Elements' vases stood out amongst all the pieces from the royal collection. Above all, however, it was the thoroughly sculptural character of the designs of 1741 that put them into a category of their own: in an unparalleled tour de force of porcelain modelling, the court sculptor and Meissen chief modeller Johann Joachim Kaendler (1706–1775) covered all the surfaces of the vase bodies with reliefs and gave them new expansive outlines by applying a wealth of exuberantly lively fully modelled figural elements.

Even in the 18th century these factors appear to have given the Meissen 'Elements' vases pride of place in the porcelain cabinet of the Dresden Residence. The historical photographs from the late 19th and early 20th centuries (cf. fig. 2, p. 39) show slightly varied arrangements in which more than 20 examples of the vases 'Fire', 'Water', 'Air' and 'Earth' dominate the central axis of the wall on the courtyard side. However, when the porcelain was removed from the Tower Room for safe keeping in 1941, later to be evacuated from Dresden for protection from the ravages of war, these unique Meissen masterpieces disappeared from the public eye entirely. With the exception of one set of vases that was restored in exemplary fashion in 1990 and has been shown occasionally in special exhibitions in Germany and abroad, the vases' poor state of preservation condemned them to stay out of sight

in the depository of the Porzellansammlung. Once planning was under way for them to be put back on display in the Tower Room, it was clearly time for them to be restored and for certain missing covers and feet to be made anew at the Meissen porcelain manufactory.¹ In the reconstructed interior of the porcelain cabinet the 'Elements' vases assume a more prominent role than ever before, as many of the wall consoles have to stand empty on account of the extensive war losses suffered by the Tower Room holdings. The new presentation is thus a positive invitation to focus more closely upon these outstanding examples of Kaendler's extraordinary creativity.

FIRE, WATER, AIR AND EARTH

The iconographical programme of the allegorical garniture of vases (fig. 2) is described in detail in Kaendler's work report for December 1741.² The central vase represents France, flourishing under the wise governance of Louis XV (1710–1774), who is seen in profile, framed with a laurel wreath, adorning the body of the vase. Under the portrait medallion, a winged putto holds the French royal crown over the coat of arms, framed with rocailles, of the kings of France and Navarre. Above the likeness of the king is the head of the sun-god Apollo in a sunburst. On the cover two putti hold a shield, crowned once again, accompanied by the monarch's monogram. On the left shoulder of the vase sits Flora, goddess of spring, who scatters flowers from a basket in allusion to the prosperity of the land of France. Hovering over the right shoulder of the vase is Fama, proclaiming King Louis XV's undying glory with an instrument recorded as a 'Posaune' or 'trombone' (now lost).

Fig. 1

The central vase ('The flowering of France')

Modeller: Johann Joachim Kaendler

Meissen, 1742; H. 84 cm

Dresden, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 107 a, b



Fig. 2

Five-part garniture of 'Elements' vases

Modellers: Johann Joachim Kaendler, Johann Friedrich Eberlein
Meissen, 1742; H. 84 cm (central vase)

Dresden, Porzellansammlung, inv. nos. PE 104 a, b, PE 101,
PE 107 a, b, PE 7789, PE 3735 a, b (from l. to r.)

Symmetrically arranged on either side of the garniture's grand central vase are two ewers and two somewhat smaller covered vases, representing the Four Elements: Fire, Water, Air and Earth. In accordance with a standard iconographical tradition, Kaendler assigned each Element certain mythological figures and human activities.³ Fire is represented by the father of all the gods of antiquity, Jupiter, who is seen riding an eagle and hurling a lightning bolt. In the richly peopled relief scene on the body of the vase, Fire is equated with the art of war (fig. 3), the battle scene being flanked by Mars and a fully modelled trophy of the spoils of war with weapons, armour and military drums as a sign of victory. Chained to the foot of the vase is a captive figure whose hair and clothes mark him out as a native of the continent of America colonized by Europe.

The 'Elements' vase 'Water' takes the form of a ewer with a shell-like lip and a bundle of reeds as a handle. On the side, sailing ships are seen making their way across the riffled waters; rising out of the waves is a quadriga of seahorses drawing a seashell chariot with Neptune, god of the sea (fig. 4). To the left, the low-relief sea scene is flanked by the mythological siren, half woman, half fish; below the scene, the foot of the ewer is decorated with dolphins.

The counterpart piece to 'Water' is 'Air', bearing the figure of the goddess Juno with a peacock as her attribute (fig. 5). The handle is modelled in the form of a billowing cloth, held at the top by two bagpipe-playing putti and at the lower end by Zephyrus, god of the west wind and associated with spring, who is seen 'blowing flowers out of his nostrils'.⁴ Birds' feathers adorn the spout and the foot, on which putti

exhale cascades of flowers. The relief on the side of the body shows, high above the clouds, a hunting scene with falcons going after herons.

Analogously with 'Air', the relief scene on the fourth 'Elements' vase, 'Earth', shows hunting on land: in the foreground a pack of hounds has brought a wild boar to bay, while a stag and a boar, escaping from the hounds, are in danger of rushing into a spread net. The relief is framed by further hunting scenes, now fully modelled, with hounds in close pursuit of a stag and a red deer (fig. 6). 'Earth' differs from the other 'Elements' vases in its particularly *mouvementé*, dynamic character, which with its flowing transitions between low relief, high relief and fully modelled figures and elements makes the vase's foot and body into one single pictorial space that also extends to include the figural cover with the figure of Diana, goddess of the hunt.



THE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF THE TOWER ROOM UP TO 1945

Located on the second floor of the north wing of the Dresden Residence, the Tower Room is part of the tower known as the *Hausmannsturm*, which dates from around 1400 and formed the north-western fortification of the medieval castle. Its lower floors are among the oldest parts of the present-day palace complex. The tower was rebuilt in the course of the palace being extended westwards between 1547 and 1556. The generously sized, four-wing complex with staircase towers in the corners of the courtyard was erected by Kurfürst Moritz. The *Hausmannsturm* then stood on the central axis of the north wing and was enhanced by the addition of a loggia in front of it on the courtyard side. All the facades were decorated with sgraffito, while frescoes were painted on the rear wall of the loggia (cf. fig. 1 on p. 13).

THE RENAISSANCE ROOM

As part of these measures, a coved vault was inserted above the Tower Room, a new form of construction, similar to the vault in the later *Provinzwappenzimmer* of the *Grünes Gewölbe*, which spanned the space without the need for columns. Implementing the design for the ceiling to the Tower Room, which remained almost completely unaltered until 1945, was the most important change made in the mid-16th century. The ceiling plasterwork can be attributed to Antonio Brocco (1553–1595) from Campione on Lake Lugano. In terms of both its formal elements and its dating, this plasterwork is close to the stucco in the later *Pretiosensaal* in the *Grünes Gewölbe*, which in turn is related to the decorative plasterwork in the summer palace of Hvězda (known in German as Schloss Stern), near Prague.¹ Similar right down to details at certain places, the delicate figurative and ornamental plasterwork at Hvězda was made in 1558, that is after the completion of both the Dresden ceilings. While little is known about the design of the wall surfaces in

the Tower Room, they may have been articulated in a similar way to the walls of the *Pretiosensaal*, where grooves were made in the plaster to imitate columns. This device was an obvious design choice and is also to be found in the electoral *Betstube* (prayer room) in the neighbouring *Schlosskapelle*, only fragments of which have survived.

'In 1617 it is said about the decoration of the walls that it consists of tapestries with depictions of wild people.'² These were, most likely, 'the eight large pieces with wild men, Moors and dwarves' that are listed in the 'Acta Hoff-Tapeterey' of 1589–1690.³ In the inventory of the tapestry vault ('Inventarium über das Churfürstl. Sächs. Tapeterey Gewölbe in Dresden 1683') these tapestries are described as 'eight pieces showing wild men' that are 'used in the Tower Room'.⁴

FITTING OUT THE DISPLAY BUFFET FOR THE WEDDING CELEBRATIONS IN 1719

The Tower Room was evidently not affected by the fire that broke out in the palace in 1701. In the course of the planning (which started in 1718) for the festivities to celebrate the marriage of the electoral prince Friedrich August (1696–1763) to Maria Josepha of Austria (1699–1757), daughter of the late Emperor Joseph I, it was incorporated into the suite of rooms making up the state apartments.

This construction work in the royal palace was urgently necessary in order to meet the demands of court ceremony, which required a *piano nobile* for the purpose of representation on the second floor, with *Paradeappartements* (state apartments) in the west and the north wings. Ceilings were raised and windows were increased in height, new doorways were made, and the rooms were decorated with costly fabrics and elaborately and extremely expensively furnished.

Fig. 1

The Tower Room in the Dresden Residence

Reproduction from Berling 1900, plate 1

While Augustus the Strong (1670–1733) himself closely monitored the plans for decorating the suite of state apartments, he generally took the expert advice of the Generalintendant der Militär- und Zivilbauten, Count August Christoph von Wackerbarth (1662–1734). Although Wackerbarth supervised the construction work, the architect Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann (1662–1736) and the interior designer Raymond Leplat (ca. 1664 – before 1742) should be seen as the real authors of these rooms.

These preparations were made under enormous time pressure and the funds available for the furnishings, most of which were still to be acquired, were limited. On 11 November 1718, Wackerbarth wrote to King Augustus in Warsaw: ‘May Your Majesty do me the honour of believing that the alterations to the doors and windows and the raising of the ceilings are the smallest matters still to be dealt with in the state apartments, for the panelling and the parquet flooring, that is to say, the works in wood, are yet to be made and are needed to complete the magnificent furnishing. And all this, noble lord, requires time and money.’¹⁵

The correspondence between Augustus the Strong and Count Wackerbarth offers more precise information about the intentions. For instance, the following note is made on a drawing enclosed with a letter dated 15 October 1718: ‘The Tower Room, for the Buffet, with carmine damask’ (‘Das Thurmzimmer, für das Buffet, mit carmoisin-rotem Damast’). As this letter deals exclusively with wall coverings and furnishings of the rooms and halls, it must be assumed that the intention was to cover at least parts of the walls with fabric. In December 1718, in the correspondence referred to above dealing with the furnishing of ‘His Majesty’s Parade Zimmer’, only one glass chandelier (‘1 gläserner Cron Leuchter’) is planned for the Tower Room. A note says: ‘This is where the Buffet is to be made, the other furnishings cannot be decided upon, as His Majesty has not yet conveyed His wishes.’¹⁶

It was only in the ‘Ordre’ dated 14 December 1718 and sent by Augustus the Strong from Warsaw to ‘Accisrath’ Stark that it was decided that ‘Messrs Leplat, Longuelune, Dinglinger and others should produce designs’.¹⁷ This suggests that by the end of 1718 the silver pieces required for the Buffet had already been made or acquired and the designs for the architecture of the wall panelling and the presentation had been commissioned. The plans, two of which are preserved in the

Kupferstich-Kabinett of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, can therefore only have been made at the beginning of 1719, at the earliest (cf. fig. 1, p. 20 f. and fig. 2, p. 22 f.).¹⁸

As in the *Pretiosensaal* of the *Grünes Gewölbe*, the rich figurative and ornamental ceiling plasterwork from 1553 was simply whitewashed. The solid pilasters and panels and the plinth to the wall panelling were made of softwood painted in vermillion red and finished with varnish. This ‘lacquering’ of the surfaces can be imagined as similar to the decoration of the *Weißsilberzimmer* in the *Grünes Gewölbe* executed in 1728/29, ten years later. The main display surface of the Tower Room was a chimneypiece on the central axis of the south wall on which objects were prominently displayed, as they also were on the magnificent altar-like table in front of it. The vermillion wooden surfaces harmonized with the gilded wood carvings, consoles and mirror frames and with the profiled architectural beading. All 24 pilasters in the cladding had carved capitals. The altar-like display table in front of the chimneypiece was also carried on pilasters, and the drawer compartment had three elaborately carved and gilded fronts. The chimney hood was positioned above two further pilasters with richly engraved capitals.

Of the 356 consoles of 37 different types that are documented in photographs from 1896, 210 were carved and gilded. Forty consoles sat directly on top of the panel moulding, with six further ones mounted on the main wall in the fireplace opening. All of them were painted red and had oil gilded profiles. The type of console most frequently used in the Tower Room reoccurs 143 times on the pilasters and walls. The 15 versions of this console differ clearly in the way the shelves are made and in the height at which they are mounted. The overmantel has 78 consoles of 23 different types, including the pilaster consoles and console-like volutes. There were further consoles on the main cornice, both on the upper round profile and on the string course.

Each of the two window reveals had 25 consoles mounted parallel to and on either side of the mirrors there. The niche therefore had a total of 50 consoles. The crowning elements to the four corner mirrors, each with a central mascarón motif and most likely carved by Johann Benjamin Thomae (1682–1751), resembled comparable pieces in the *Eckkabinett* of the *Grünes Gewölbe*. As with the *Grünes Gewölbe*, this

Fig. 2

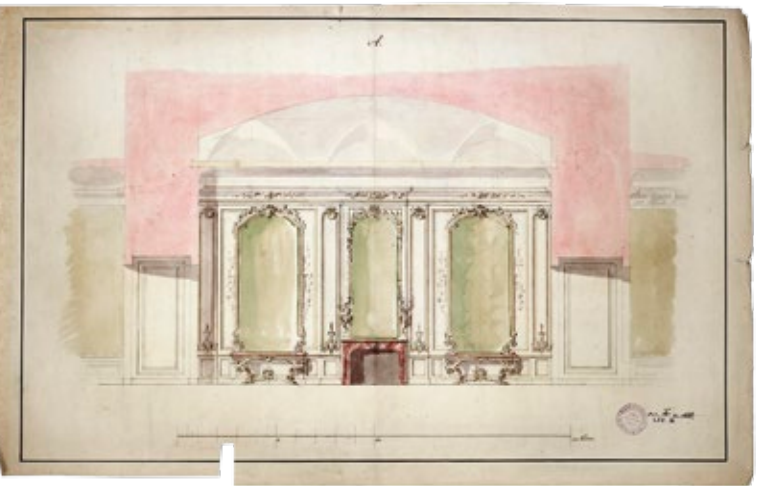
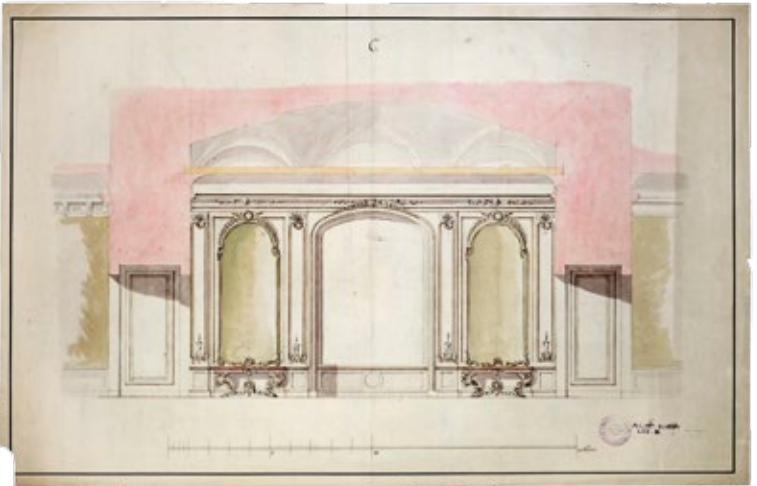
Tower Room, elevation of north wall, design

ca. 1767; pen, brush and ink, with colour wash; 53.7 × 83.4 cm
Dresden, Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Sachsen, Plansammlung,
inv. no. M 6. X., fol. 134

Fig. 3

Tower Room, elevation of the south wall, design

ca. 1767; pen, brush and ink, colour wash; 57.2 × 86.5 cm
Dresden, Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Sachsen, Plansammlung,
inv. no. M 6. X., l. 133



room could be locked by large iron doors, like a strongroom. The floor was made of slabs of white Crottendorf limestone and green serpentinite laid in a chequerboard pattern. In the areas of floor in the doorways and the window niche, smaller slabs of the same materials were used. The room was originally lit by a glass chandelier with 24 arms. As we learn from the ‘Königl. Pohnisches und Churfürstl. Sächs. Hoff Bett Meister Inventarium’ drawn up by ‘Bettmeister’ Caspar Hanisch in 1720, as early as 1722 the lighting of the Buffet room was improved by increasing the number of glass chandeliers: ‘In April 1722 four glass chandeliers were delivered to the Royal Buffet by Glas Factor Springer.’¹⁹

Work in the Tower Room was completed at the end of May 1719, a good four months before the wedding celebrations on 2 and 3 September. A total of 1,011 talers had to be paid for ‘decorating the Tower Room on the second floor of the palace and for fitting out the Buffet’.²⁰ Of this sum, ‘120 Taler, 17 Groschen und 3 Pfennige’ were to be paid to ‘the Berlin merchants Splitgraben and Daun for mirrors delivered to the palace to decorate the Buffet in the Tower for the festivities.’²¹

During the wedding celebrations in September 1719, the Buffet had the first opportunity to play its intended role as a setting in which the enormous silver collection of the House of Wettin could be displayed. This was the only room on the second floor of the royal palace in which, during the entry of the bride on 2 September, she was not flanked by a guard of honour as she proceeded, most likely so that she and others would be fully able to admire the state silver.²²

THE PLANS FOR THE REDESIGN IN THE LATE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY AND THE RENOVATIONS IN 1847 AND 1870

The surviving plans for the complete redesign of the Tower Room can be dated to after the end of the Seven Years War (1756–1763). They should probably be placed in the same context as the modernization work carried out in 1761 on the first floor of the east wing and in the *Georgenbau*, and as the stove niches created in 1767 in the *Eckparadesaal* and in both large rooms in the north wing. As part of this work, it was planned to

jettison the wooden wall panelling and the plasterwork ceiling by Antonio Brocco entirely and to create a Rococo cabinet. The walls were to be articulated by full-height pier glasses with small console tables in front of them and by new architectural elements. The chimneypiece was to be replaced by a functioning fireplace.²³ Although these measures were never carried out, it seems likely that the delicate Rococo carvings to the panels and to the altar-like display table, which are visible in all the historical photographs, date from this period (figs. 2 and 3).

Plans dating from 1838 by Eduard Bendemann (1811–1889) and Otto von Wolframsdorf (1803–1849) for the redesign of the interior of the *Paraderäume* (state rooms) in the north wing have survived. It was intended to make magnificent cycles of paintings in the Tower Room, the Ballroom and the Throne Hall. With a painting on the theme of ‘The Peoples Worshipping in the New Jerusalem’, the Tower Hall was to play the role of a central crystallization point. These designs have been preserved (fig. 4).²⁴ An order issued by King Friedrich August II (1797–1854) on 17 April states: ‘We have decided to have Professor Bendemann make fresco paintings, based on drawings he has presented to us, in



1

Bulbous vase

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_21

17. Hohe, bauchige Vase mit scharf abgesetztem, eingezogenen Fuß und Hals, frei verteilte Blütenzweige mit sitzenden Vögeln und fliegenden Schmetterlingen, Schmelzfarbenbemalung in Rot, Purpur, Grün, Blau, Gelb, Schwarz, Gold, Meißner Porzellan, gutes Stück, Schl.-Inv. III 28 (sonst ohne Bezeichnung), Höhe: 38 cm, Durchmesser: ca. 21 cm.
(Turmzimmer, vormal. Residenzschloß Dresden).

Hausmarschallamt number: III 28
Japanese Palace number: –
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel painting and gold, ca. 1730–1735
No manufactory mark
Measurements: H. 38 cm, Ø ca. 21 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW 1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 246 (Dantezimmer).

FORM

Waisted foot rising from a broad rim that is slightly turned up at the edge; above the foot an expansively bulbous body with sloping shoulder; discrete neck with broad mouth and everted lip.

DECORATION

Freely painted on the body, profuse 'Indian' flowers and flowering branches with small birds perched upon the branches; running around the foot and neck a loose foliate and flowering stem with birds perched thereon; gilded foot rim.

COMMENTARY

For comparison, similar form and similar but not identical decoration to cat. nos. 2 and 3; for the form, cf. SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 2021 (HMA no. III 26).

2

Bulbous vase

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_2

The photo card, the historical photograph and the negative from the 1940s bear no inscription.

Hausmarschallamt number: –
Japanese Palace number: –
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel painting and gold, ca. 1730–1735
Very likely no manufactory mark
Measurements: H. 38 cm, Ø ca. 21 cm (est.)

FORM

Waisted foot rising from a broad rim that is slightly turned up at the edge; above the foot an expansively bulbous body with sloping shoulder; discrete neck with broad mouth and everted lip.

DECORATION

Freely painted on the body, profuse 'Indian' flowers on long branches and above the branches a bird; running around the foot and neck a loose foliate and flowering stem with birds perched thereon; gilded foot rim.

COMMENTARY

Similar form and very similar decoration to cat. 1 (HMA no. III 28); for the form, cf. SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 2021 (HMA no. III 26, cat. 3.1).

The vase has been attributed to the Tower Room because the photograph shows a single object in the same style as so many others known to have been in the porcelain cabinet.



3

Bulbous vase

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_3

1. Hohe, bauchige Vase mit abgesetztem, eingezogenem Fuß und Hals, frei verteilte dichte Blütenzweige mit fliegenden Vögeln und Insekten, Schmelzfarbenbemalung in Rot, Purpur, Grün, Blau, Gelb, Braun, Schwarz, Gold, Meißner Porzellan, III 29 (sonst keine Bezeichnung), Höhe: 37,5 cm, Durchmesser: ca. 21 cm, (am Hals ein Stück abgeschlagen). (Turmzimmer, vormaliges Residenzschloß Dresden).

Hausmarschallamt number: III 29
Japanese Palace number: –
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel painting and gold, ca. 1730–1735
No manufactory mark
Measurements: H. 37 cm, Ø ca. 21 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW 1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 246 (Dantezimmer).

FORM

Waisted foot rising from a broad rim that is slightly turned up at the edge; above the foot an expansively bulbous body with sloping shoulder; discrete neck with a broad mouth and everted lip.

DECORATION

Freely painted on the belly, 'Indian' flowers and flowering branches, decoration very dense and profuse, two magnificent large birds with spread wings sitting opposite each other on branches; around the foot and neck are loose foliate and flowering stems.

COMMENTARY

Similar form to cat. nos. 1–2 (HMA nos. III 28, 29).

Clearly visible are a chip on the outer everted lip and small defects in the glaze on the foot rim. Preserved in the Porzellansammlung is a vase very comparable in form and decoration (HMA no. III 26, cat. 3.1):

SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 2021
Measurements: H. 37.1 cm, Ø 21.1 cm

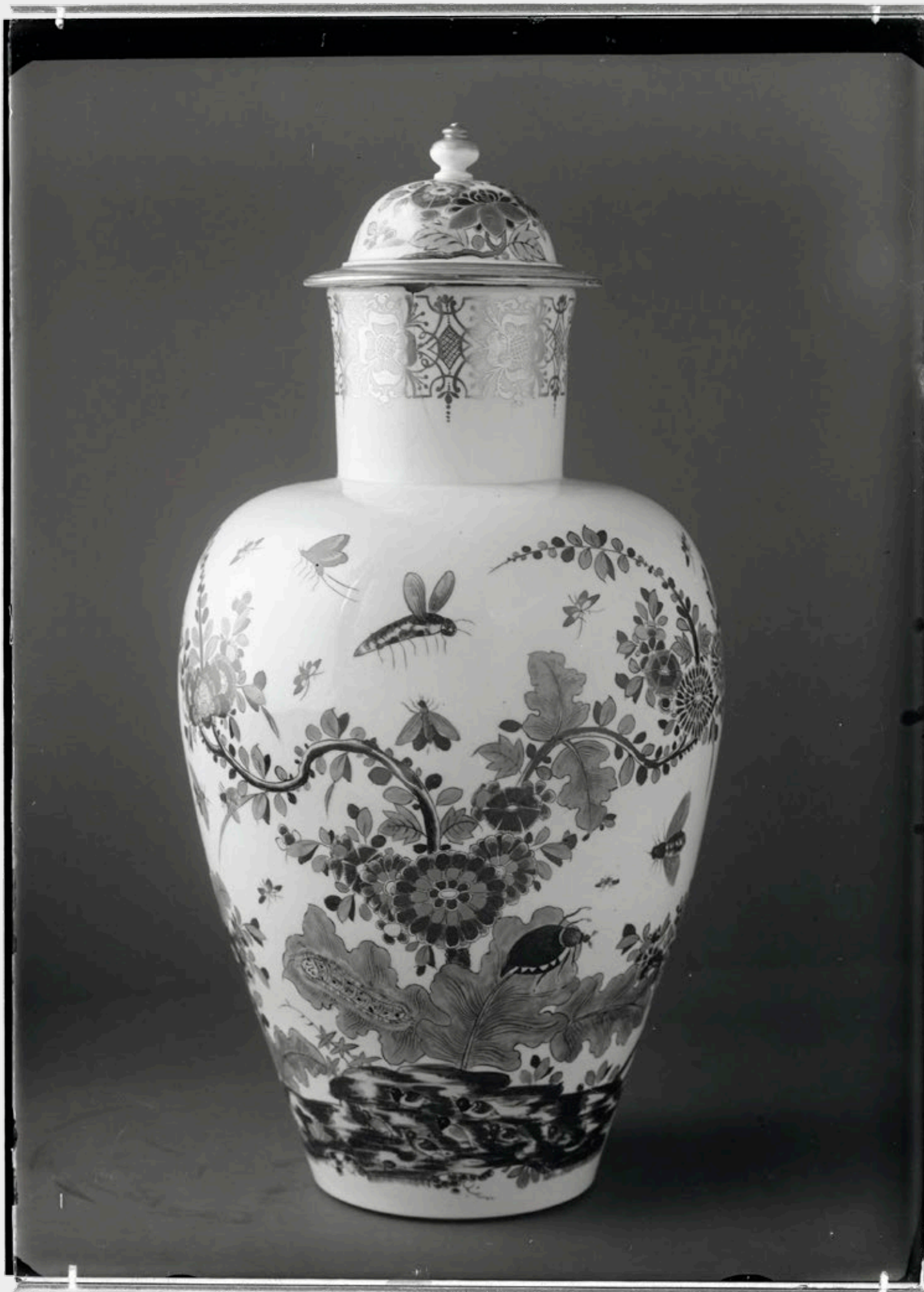
A photograph of 1934 in the Deutsche Fotothek Dresden (df_hauptkatalog_0051723) shows the 'Hall of the Hundred Vases' in the 1933 exhibition *August der Starke und seine Zeit*. Clearly recognizable on the east wall with fireplace are four vases in the form discussed here, one of which is the extant vase (inv. no. PE 2021) and three of which (cat. nos. 1–3) are lost.



Cat. 3.1



Cat. 3.2 Residence, west wing, second *Kaffeesalon*, the 'Hall of the Hundred Vases', east wall with fireplace during the exhibition *August der Starke und seine Zeit*, 1933. Dresden, SLUB, Deutsche Fotothek, photo no. df_hauptkatalog_0051723



26

Covered vase

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_7

5. Deckelvase mit flacher Schulter, über den Gefäßkörper frei verteilte Blütensträucher mit fliegenden und sitzenden großen Insekten, Schmelzfarbenbemalung in: Grün, Blau, Rot, Purpur, Gelb, Braun, Gold, am Vasenrand Goldkante auf weißem Grund, Deckel: Lüsterfarbenrand, Meißner Porzellan, steiles AR III 103
Höhe: 36 cm (mit Deckel), Durchmesser: ca. 18 cm.

On the back of the historical paper print is a pencil annotation by Ludwig Schnorr von Carolsfeld: *Stadler. Schnorr v. Carolsf.*

Hausmarschallamt number: III 103
Japanese Palace number: –
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel painting and gold, ca. 1725–1730
Manufactory mark: AR monogram in underglaze blue (steep)
Measurements: H. 36 cm, Ø ca. 18 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW 1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 228 (Dantezimmer).

FORM

Slender, egg-shaped body; flat shoulder with a discrete neck, tall and slightly conical; domed cover with sloping moulded rim, ball-shaped finial with several mouldings.

DECORATION

Above the standing surface is a broad area made up of sods of earth with numerous small birds playing around upon it; issuing from three very large lobed leaves are two flowering growths with sturdy branches, small leaves and larger flowers, in the centre before the point of ramification is a decorative ensemble of flowers; at ground level, sitting to the left



Cat. 26.1

on the large leaves, are a large caterpillar and a cockchafer; flying amongst the branches are numerous insects, some very large; the shoulder is flat and apparently undecorated; running around the neck is a broad gold-lace ornament made up of geometrical lines and floral rosettes; on the cover is a large stem with flowers; the cover rim decorated with lustre colour, the cover finial half decorated with gold or lustre.

COMMENTARY

The cover seen in the historical photograph is preserved (cat. 26.1):

SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 5440
(HMA no. III 102)

Measurements: H. 6.5 cm, Ø 10 cm

The preserved cover was also used for the photograph of the vase with the HMA number III 59 (see cat. 9).

Visible in the historical photograph is a defect on the upper rim of the vase, from which an oblique crack proceeds across the neck. The two can be regarded as a distinguishing feature of this vase.



Cat. 27.1

27

Covered vase

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_40

36. *Bauchige Deckelvase, Höroldtmalerei, fliegende Vögel und Schmetterling zwischen Blütenranken, braune Vögel, am Boden AR, Schl.-Inv. III 104 +, Höhe mit Deckel: 38,5 cm. (Turmzimmer, vormal. Residenzschloß Dresden).*

Hausmarschallamt number: III 104
Japanese Palace number: –
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel painting and gold, ca. 1730–1735
Manufactory mark: AR monogram in underglaze blue
Measurements: H. 38.5 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW 1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 250 (Dantezimmer).

LITERATURE

Weber 2013, vol. 2, p. 439 f., cat. 458.

FORM

Flat-bottomed, markedly bulbous vase; flat horizontal shoulder with discrete cylindrical neck; small domed cover, probably not belonging to the vase, with a sloping projecting rim; pointed oval finial with several mouldings.

DECORATION

Above the standing surface, growing out of a dense array of leaves and flowers and a stylized rock is a sturdy branch that ramifies and spreads asymmetrically over the side surface bearing magnificent blooms and small leaves;

under the shoulder are a bird and an insect in flight; large parts of the vase's surface were left white, including the flat shoulder; the neck is set off from the body with a line of gold, on the neck is an intricate stem with flowers; on the cover a larger flowering stem; the cover rim is gilded; running around the cover finial is a single line of gold, the tip decorated with several brushstrokes of gold all of the same length.

COMMENTARY

The cover seen in the historical photograph is preserved (cat. 27.1):

SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 2021 b
Measurements: H. 7.3 cm, Ø 10.5 cm



Cat. 33

33

Two covered jars, 'Eistöpf' ('ice cream jars')

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung, negative number: GN_B_56

55. Rechts: Deckelnapf, Deckel mit Pinienzapfen, eng angedrückten Henkeln mit Köpfen, Schmelzfarbenbemalung nach jap. Vorbild, Meißner

Porzellan, eingeschliffene Johanneums-Marke N 10 w, große Meißner Schwerter in Überglasur, III 146+, Höhe: 32 cm, Durchmesser: ca. 26 cm. Links: Deckelnapf mit geschwungenen Henkeln mit Köpfen, auf dem Deckel Pinien-Zapfen, Schmelzfarbenbemalung in jap. Stile, Meißner Porzellan. Johanneums-Marke eingeschliffen, N 9 w, III 145, Höhe: 32,5 cm, Durchmesser: 27 cm. (Turmzimmer, vormal. Residenzschloß Dresden).

Hausmarschallamt number according to photo card: III 145 (left); III 146 (right) [However, the preserved cover of the right-hand

jar bears the number III 147* (it is possible that the annotation III 146 was a slip of the pen).] Japanese Palace numbers according to photo card: N 9 w (left), on the object: N 10 w (left-hand cover); N 10 w (right, also thus on the object) Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel painting and gold, 1729–1731 Manufactory mark: on the right-hand jar large crossed swords in overglaze enamel, probably the same on the left-hand vessel Measurements: H. 32.5 cm, Ø 27 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW 1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat); SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 226, (III 145, III 146), p. 250 (III 147) (Turmzimmer); SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 12, 1803, fol. 150v: 10 Zwey dergleichen [bunte Terrine]; SKD Archive, nos. 325–333, 1779: not included; SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 58: not included; SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 7, 1769, fol. 187v: No. 10. Drey bunde Terrinen.

LITERATURE

Boltz 1996, p. 72.

FORM

Left-hand covered jar – rising over a narrow waisted foot is a steep-sided body broadening to a rounded moulding at the rim; the cover tapers to a pine-cone finial on a moulded base, the cover rim with a slightly projecting rounded moulding; two volute handles with women's heads; right-hand covered jar – same as left-hand covered jar, except for the solid volute handles.

DECORATION

On the side and cover free floral decoration in the Kakiemon style; on the front are rice-straw fences, behind them flowering branches, sitting on one curiously bent branch is a bird like a phoenix; undecorated are the finial, cover rim, volute handles with female heads (left) and volute handles (right).

COMMENTARY

The right-hand covered jar in the historical photograph is preserved (cat. 33.1): SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 5006 a, b (Japanese Palace no. N 10 W) Measurements: H. 32.5 cm, L. 29.1 cm, Ø 20.3 cm

The left-hand cover in the historical photograph is preserved (cat. 33.2): SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 5539 (Japanese Palace no. N 10 W) Measurements: H. 8 cm, Ø 20 cm



Cat. 33.1



Cat. 33.2



34

Covered jar, 'Eistopf' (‘ice cream jar’)

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_88

The photo card bears no inscription. The historical paper print is missing. Similarly, the manuscript of the inscriptions for the Tower Room photo card index does not contain the text for no. 91. The original photo sleeve bears the inscription: *Dresdner Schloß, Turmzimmer, Nr. 91.*

Hausmarschallamt number: probably III 146
Japanese Palace number: N 9 w
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel
painting and gold, 1729–1731
Manufactory mark: unknown
Measurements: H. ca. 25 cm (est.)

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW
1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 226
(Turmzimmer);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 12, 1803,
fol. 150v: 9 *Eine bunte Terrine.*;
SKD Archive, nos. 325–333, 1779: not included;
SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 58: not
included;
SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 7, 1769,
fol. 187v: *No. 9. Eine dergl. [tureen].*

FORM

Rising over a narrow waisted foot is a steep-
sided body; rounded moulding at the rim; cover
tapering to a pine-cone finial on a moulded
base, the cover rim with a slightly projecting
rounded moulding; two volute handles with
women's heads.

DECORATION

The jar and cover bear free floral decoration in
the Kakiemon style, with a large insect.



Cat. 34.1

COMMENTARY

The cover in the historical photograph is pre-
served, damaged (cat. 34.1). The finial is not
preserved.

SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 5540
(Japanese Palace no. N 9 W)
Measurements: H. 8.9 cm, Ø 20.3 cm

35

Two tureens

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_84

87. *Zwei runde Deckelnäpfe mit Pinienzapfen auf
den Deckeln, Meißner Porzellan, Schmelzfarben-
malerei nach jap. Vorbild.*

*Links: Unterglasurkobaltblaue Schwerter, Johan-
neumsmarke N 223 w, III 154+, Höhe: 28 cm,
Durchmesser: ca. 22 cm.*

*Rechts: Unterglasurkobaltblaue Schwerter, Jo-
hanneumsmarke N 223 w, III 157+, Höhe: 28 cm,
Durchmesser: ca. 22 cm.*

(Turmzimmer, vormal. Residenzschloß Dresden).

Hausmarschallamt number: III 154 (left);
III 157 (right)
Japanese Palace number: N 233 w
Meissen porcelain with polychrome enamel
painting and gold, decoration 1737, tureen
form older, ca. 1729/30
Manufactory mark: crossed swords in under-
glaze blue
Measurements: H. 28 cm, Ø ca. 22 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW
1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 226
(III 157, Turmzimmer);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 12, 1803,
fol. 157v: 233. *Zwey bunte Terrinen mit Arti-
schocken.*;
SKD Archive, nos. 325–333, 1779: not included;
SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 58, 1770:
not included, the numbering between N 232
and N 235 is not complete;
SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 7, 1769,
fol. 189v: 189v: *No. 233 Zwey dergleichen Terri-
nen ['bunte', polychrome].*



67

Body of the 'Elements' vase 'Earth'

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_76

79. Unterteil einer Ziervase, die Jagd darstellend,
Meißner Porzellan, III 473,
Höhe: 49 cm, Breite: ca. 40 cm.
(Turmzimmer, vormal. Residenzschloß Dresden).

Hausmarschallamt number: III 473
Japanese Palace number: –
Meissen porcelain, undecorated, 1742
Manufactory mark: unknown
Measurements: H. 49 cm, W. ca. 40 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW
1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);
SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 250
(Turmzimmer).

LITERATURE

Zimmermann 1905, p. 81; Boltz 1996; Pietsch
2002, pp. 85–91; Weber 2004; Weber 2006,
pp. 25–46; Schwartz/Munger 2007, pp. 141–
174; exh. cat. Berlin 2010, pp. 28–29, no. 6;
Weber 2010, pp. 153–161; exh. cat. Alert Bay/
Dresden 2011, pp. 177–180, nos. 35–39.

FORM

Baluster-shaped basic form, the foot with a
protuberant profile; high-lying shoulder; dis-
crete neck with oblique fluting.

DECORATION

Extending over the surface of the vase is a re-
lief scene of a hunt (battue) with nets, in the
foreground the relief, with elements ranging
from half- to fully modelled, shows dogs at-
tacking a wild boar; the sides of the vase are
embellished with fully modelled hunting
scenes that start at the foot and stretch out
away from the body to left and right; to the
left: oak branches, a leaping deer being held
by a hound; to the right: beech branches, a
leaping stag under attack from three hounds.



Cat. 67.1

COMMENTARY

The 'Elements' vase 'Earth' is part of a five-part
ensemble consisting of three covered vases
and two ewers that was intended to form a
symmetrically arranged mantelpiece garni-
ture. Johann Joachim Kaendler described the
commission, which was intended for the court
of France, in his work report of December 1741.
On the present vase representing the element
Earth he wrote as follows: 'worauf ein Hirsch
nebst Reh, und oben drauf die Göttin Diana,
oder die Waldgöttin sich befindet, solches ist
mit vielen Bäumen oder Waldung nebst Hun-
den umgeben, übrigens aber eine flach er-
habene Jagd hierbei mit präsentieret' ('on
which are a stag and a deer, and on top Diana,

the goddess of the woods, [the vase body] sur-
rounded with many trees or woods and dogs,
but also a hunt presented in low relief').
Three examples of the 'Elements' vase 'Earth'
can be seen on the south wall in the 1896
photograph of the Tower Room.

Preserved at the Porzellansammlung is a cover
probably belonging to the vase body photo-
graphed without a cover in 1941 (cat. 67.1):
SKD, Porzellansammlung, inv. no. PE 3735 b
(HMA no. III 473)
Measurements: H. 19.5 cm, W. 18.4 cm,
Ø 10.7 cm

Body of the 'Elements' vase 'Fire'

SKD, Archiv der Porzellansammlung,
negative number: GN_B_81

84. Unterteil einer weißen Zervase mit Kriegsgott und kriegesischen Emblemen, auf der Schulter 1 Geschütz, Meißner Porzellan, aus 2 Stücken zusammengeschraubt, große Schwerter, Joh. Marke: no. 423, III 489.

Höhe: 47 c, Breite: ca. 35 cm.

(Turmzimmer, vormal. Residenzschloß Dresden).

Hausmarschallamt number: III 489

Japanese Palace number: N 423 W

Meissen porcelain, undecorated, 1742

Manufactory mark: large crossed swords in underglaze blue

Measurements: H. 47 cm, W. ca. 35 cm

ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Gesetz über die Auseinandersetzung FS/HW 1924, chapter 3.1.a, p. 447 (Staat);

SächsHStA Dresden, 10701, no. 17, 1920, p. 248 (Turmzimmer).

SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 12, 1803, fol. 149v: *An weißen großen Aufsatz-Stücken, Neun Stück Vasen, 6 Stück mit Deckeln und 3 Stück ohne Deckel, 3 Stück mit belegten Jagden und 6 Stück mit Kriegs-Armaturen, 6 Stück 1 Elle 6 Zoll hoch, 18 Zoll in Diameter, 2 Stück 18 Zoll und 1 Stück 12 Zoll hoch, 15 Zoll in Diameter nebst 5 Postamenten.*;

SKD Archive, nos. 325–333, 1779, fol. 85r: *Aus dem Büffet im Residenz-Schloße ist im Jahre 1783 nachstehendes anhero gekommen, als: Eine weise Vase, mit Kriegs Armaturen belegt, 18 Zoll hoch, 15 Zoll in diam. ohne Deckel, mit Postament. [...] Fünf dergl. Postamenter, 2 Stück mit No. 423. und 3 Stück mit No. 424. gezeichnet, so zu denen Aufsaz Stücken ins Büffet gehören, allda aber nicht employret werden können.*;

SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 58: not included;

SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 7, 1769, fol. 185v: *423 w. Drey Stück dergl. [snowball flowers] mit Postamenten, 18 Zoll hoch.*;

SächsHStA Dresden, 10010, R XVI, no. 6, 1769, fol. 168v: *An weißen großen Aufsaz-Stücken [...] Zehn Stück Vasen, als. [...] 7 Stück mit Kriegs Armaturen [...] 2 Stück 18 Zoll [...].*

LITERATURE

Zimmermann 1905, p. 81; Boltz 1996; Pietsch 2002, pp. 85–91; Weber 2004, Weber 2006, pp. 25–46; Schwartz/Munger 2007, pp. 141–174; exh. cat. Berlin 2010, p. 28 f., no. 6; Weber 2010, p. 153–161; exh. cat. Alert Bay/Dresden 2011, p. 177–180, nos 35–39.

FORM

The conical retracted foot with oblique fluting terminates in a rounded moulding decorated with acanthus foliage in relief; the bulbous, high-shouldered body is mounted; fluted raised sections on the lower third; neck with oblique fluting and terminating in a rounded moulding.

DECORATION

Positioned on the foot is a fully modelled oriental slave, bound with a chain; over the fluting on the body of the vase is a relief, the foreground of which is half-modelled: a war scene with a cannon and mounted soldiers; on the sides fully modelled allegorical figures and trophies.

COMMENTARY

Like cat. 67, the 'Elements' vase 'Fire' belonged to a five-part ensemble.

Kaendler described the cover as bearing 'Jupiter with his lightning bolt' ('Jupiter mit seinem Blitz') and the body of the vase as showing 'Mars the god of war with many arms and trophies, in a battle rendered in low relief' ('Mars der Krieges Gott mit vielen Armaturen und Trophaeis, in einer flach erhabenen Bataille befindlich').

The 1769 inventory of the porcelain in the Tower Room is the only one to mention the Japanese Palace number N 423 W. In the other Residence inventories, the large white vases and ewers are only recorded summarily with references to their form and decoration. It was probably a very laborious task to check all the pieces in the wall arrangement for their inventory numbers. The 19th-century photograph shows that some of the vases were fitted in to the space available between the consoles without the cover or without the foot section. The HMA numbers were probably mostly applied to the foot sections, so that when the foot was removed the body lost its proper number.





For a good two hundred years the Tower Room on the *piano nobile* of the Dresden Residence served as a unique showroom for the electoral-royal porcelain collection. Here, alongside vases from China and Japan, King August III presented the finest products of his manufactory at Meissen, on gilded consoles against red-lacquered wall panels. In the bombing of Dresden in February 1945 the royal palace was almost entirely consumed by fire; as for the porcelain pieces, despite having been evacuated in 1943, the majority of them fell prey to plundering and destruction. Now that the porcelain cabinet has been reconstructed, some of the extant pieces – notably the spectacular ‘Elements’ garniture modelled by Johann Joachim Kaendler and two ‘Dragoons’ vases – can be displayed again. Additionally, ten silver guéridons serve as a reminder of the room’s earlier function as a ‘Silver Buffet’. This book traces the history of the cabinet from its origins in the 1730s to its destruction in 1945. It includes a comprehensive Catalogue section in which the losses from the Tower Room’s holdings are presented on the basis of the documentation of the porcelain collection undertaken in 1941.

SANDSTEIN



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